Letter from Taizé

BIMONTHLY 3.50 FF

June – July 1988 / 3

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Graduate Theological Union

MAY 23 1988

O LIVING GOD, your Spirit rests upon each one of us and, just as the almond tree begins to blossom in spring, you make even our inner deserts burst into flower.

Christ, by your continual presence as the One who is risen, you offer us a wellspring from which to draw the whole meaning of our life. At the wellspring of your presence you enable us to pass from mistrust or doubt to trust in you and in others. And the meaning of our life is found in self-giving.

Even if we should believe ourselves all alone, you are there. If there is a kind of doubt within us and if we experience almost nothing of your presence, you love us all the more for it.

Whenever we forget you, we continue to love you. Our hearts, our minds and bodies are like land thirsting for you. And the thirst for your presence lights our way even when the cross of trials weighs upon us.

As we find in you the strength to continually forgive, we come to know, already on this earth, the beginning of our own resurrection.

And so our hearts dare to say to you: Christ, Risen Lord, you love us to such a point that your presence will never fail.

MEDITATION BY BROTHER ROGER · EASTER 1988

pages 2,3,7

Taizé
Intercontinental Meetings
this year till 6 November

Madras
Intercontinental Meeting
27 - 31 December

Paris
European Meeting
30 December - 4 January

In the name of the young people of Lebanon, may the peace of the Risen Christ be with you...

It isn't possible to celebrate the resurrection without thinking of all those who suffer under a cross. An Easter message sent by a couple from Lebanon brought this home:

"We are writing from Lebanon, that beautiful country of the Middle East where the cedars of the Lord stand. A fertile land, a region where Jesus lived his thirty three years upon the earth. We are writing in the name of children in Lebanon who are lacking food, school and happiness, and in the name of the young people of Lebanon who feel lost in the face of an unhappy past, an intolerable present and a dark and unknown future. We write both with pleasure and with pain. In the face of everything here, we are writing because it is in the desert that one needs a spring, and in times of difficulty that one is thirsty for tenderness. Impelled to do so by the faith of the poor and the gentle, by the hope of those who suffer, by the love of the merciful and the pure in heart, we are writing to say, from the heart of the terrible crisis of Lebanon: May the peace of the Risen Christ be with you... and also with us. Pray for us, and for the whole world." ■

Easter at Taizé

Due to the spread of holiday dates, the Easter meetings lasted four weeks this year. The group of Indians who had come for the European Meeting in Rome and the month of January were replaced by another group staying until May. In the same way Chileans, South Africans and others are relaying one another at Taizé and in stays in local church communities throughout Europe.

From June onwards, there will be an even greater number of young people from southern continents taking part in the meetings. We hope to be able to welcome more "intercontinentals" than last year, if more European parishes say that they want to invite someone from another continent.

On the eve of Easter, Pierre, from Haiti, explained that "during the Intercontinental Meetings, we wish to discover how, in every person, the inner life develops between two points. The first point is the starting point: the inner life has a source, it is nourished by Christian community, by common prayer, and in the eucharist. So the inner life does not leave us in solitude. The other point, the end point, is that the inner life impels us towards others and stimulates us to give our lives. To give one's life for others is the kernel of the Gospel. The inner life stimulates us to a gift of self in the Church or in the human family, it is fulfilled in a solidarity with others."

Some had already heard the news before arriving at Taizé: the two meetings at the end of the year will be: an Intercontinental Meeting in Madras (27th - 31st December) and a European Meeting in Paris (30th December - 4th January). □

European Meeting
30 December 1988 -
4 January 1989

Participants will be welcomed by families and by the parishes of Paris. There will be morning prayer locally in the parishes, and then midday and evening in city-centre churches. Thus the European Meeting will be an opportunity to deepen and share our search for God and for trust between the peoples of the earth. Young people from all over Europe, both East and West, will get to know each other better, while participating in the life of the Church in Paris. It is suggested that participants prepare beforehand by reflection in small groups and in prayer, so that the meeting be a stimulus for their own involvement at home.

As in the other European Meetings, the focus of the mornings spent in the parishes will be meeting people who are committed to serving others. In a city like Paris, where people are so alone in the crowd, the meeting and the preparation beforehand will enable a multitude of visits to people who are cut off and to those who dare to give of their time or open their home. Won't these visits be like the weaving of a fabric of hope in the city?

More practical details about the meeting will be in the next **Letter from Taizé.** □

Madras. The presence of so many Indians at Taizé this last year, as well as the visits they have made in villages and cities in Europe, constitutes a pressing invitation to return the visit in order to visit the peoples of India that have shown such great vitality in welcoming the Gospel and communicating it to others. Those who have heard the Indians know that, in the face of the big problems of society, they are forging roads of social solidarity and are bearing witness to the Gospel in all its freshness.

INTER CONTINENTAL MEETING
27 - 31 December 1988

madras INDIA

TAIZÉ

Intercontinental Meeting 27 - 31 December

A double invitation lay at the beginning of the first meeting in Madras (December 1985): on the one hand from the Catholic bishop responsible for youth work, and on the other from the Church of South India (a union of the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches). The Orthodox Churches took part as well.

The next Madras meeting has also been decided on with common accord. The same Catholic bishop, together with the bishop who has taken on his responsibility for youth work, came to Taizé together last summer, and plans began. And the General Secretary of the Church of South India writes, "I am most delighted to learn of the Intercontinental Meeting in Madras under the theme of 'Inner Life and Human Solidarity'. I praise God for all the intimations of the Spirit that permeate our world through these intercontinental meetings. We are planning to gather soon all the CSI members who visited Taizé last year, to become a first prayer support group for the Madras meeting in December. As before, our Church and bishops and the dioceses will gladly join again this Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth."

In Madras, participants will be welcomed by parishes for the five days of meeting. Twice each day, all will gather for common prayer under a "pandal", a construction made of bamboo and straw. Meetings in small groups will enable an exchange between the participants from all over India, from other countries in Asia, and from other continents.

For this exchange to be meaningful, preparation is important. Preparation above all for listening in a way that goes beyond preconceived ideas and difficulties to understand. Preparation too, to be able to express the life of one's own local community and Church. This kind of preparation can begin straightaway. For all the Europeans who want to go to the Madras meeting, a stay at Taizé this year is essential.

Preparation is needed in India too. Some brothers of Taizé are already in Madras and a big effort will be made to arrange visits in all the different regions of India. Three years ago, in every region, preparation meetings were held fortnightly.

Date: 27th December 1988 - 31st December 1988. Contact Taizé if you would like to stay longer in India, either before or after the meeting.

Pre-registration: Send the form to Taizé before 31st July. You will then receive further information, in particular concerning your entry visa for India; also information about which travel agency in your country offers tickets cheaply. Europeans should try to come to Taizé for a week during the summer.

Age: preferably between 20 and 30 years old.

The journey: For most people it will not be easy to find money for the journey. Three years ago, for the first Madras meeting, groups and parishes decided to send a representative. Some also collected money in order to help a person from another continent attend the meeting. At the moment it is possible to find a return ticket London-Bombay for about £400. The cheapest way to continue to Madras is by train (30 hours).

Contributions to costs cover meals, accommodation, transport and participation in all the costs of the meeting. Each person contributes as is possible; for Europeans, reckon on £5 to £8 per day. A more exact cost-guideline will be worked out later.

An Indian priest who came to Taizé said this,

"During the seven months before the first Madras meeting, young people in the diocese gathered, prayed together, talked about the questions that had been suggested to everyone — the same questions as at Taizé. During this time, each person understood that he or she was not going to Madras as a spokesman for a group but going with a personal commitment. Thanks to this preparation, after the meeting, any spirit of rivalry was replaced by a mutual attention and the joy of being together. This year, we are suggesting that all the young people of the diocese join in the preparation for the meeting, even if only a small number can actually make the journey. I believe that the young people of my region will be able to communicate their enthusiasm. In our country, it is often young people who communicate the faith, probably because the population is young. During the Madras meeting, it will not only be the times spent together in prayer and groups that will mark, but also the more personal sharing that will be possible by staying in families. We are very lucky in having kept a strong sense of the family." □

Registration form, to sent be to: MEETINGS, 71250 TAIZÉ-COMMUNITY, FRANCE (tel. 85.50.18.18)

FIRST NAME :

FAMILY NAME :

ADDRESS :

(with post code and country)

Tel.: ...../..... Profession : ..... Age : .....

I intend to take part in the Madras meeting.

I have already been to Taizé : no / yes (last stay, month : ..... year : .....)

At Taizé, I am in contact with : .....

Daring to take the first step

Those who took part in the Rome meeting were able to notice the presence of the Hungarians. It was the first time that they participated in such large numbers at a European meeting. Some of them have sent us the reactions they gathered on returning home.

"Each person was touched in a different way by the experience in Rome. For some, it was necessary to make a concrete initiative immediately; for others, to continue a common prayer. Many were not able to see very clearly what would be the next step, so it was essential to be able to speak together as a group.

The large number of young Hungarians who prepared at home and participated in the European meeting in Rome is a sign of the deep expectant waiting that enlivens a section of the young people in the country. They are happy to have been able to meet with young people from other countries and to share with them their experiences and questioning. They also look forward to deepening a common prayer and discovering the universality of the Church.

As elsewhere in Europe, it is not by measuring the participation in the Sunday services, or by counting the number of seminarians that something new in the life of the Church is disclosed. Rather, we need to underline the new attention being paid to a common prayer which has aleady been expressed for a certain time in the country. We notice it through a renewal of traditional pilgrimages which are gathering together more and more people. We also see it in the mushrooming of many different kinds of small prayer groups, especially in the towns.

For us, it is not a question of constructing a strong Church which would be able to impose itself upon society. It is a renewal in deep adherence to the Gospel, in its simplicity and in its radical call, which really counts. Indeed, while being attentive to the fine human hope brought about by the current evolution in the public, economic and cultural life in our country, the Church must be the sign of a superabundance of hope, of a way of holiness. The Church must be a place where we can discover the meaning of our existence over and above the justifiable search for material comfort and for responsibility in the construction of human society.

In the common prayer, the Church points out and gathers together the wellsprings of a hope: the richness of Bible readings, traditional or meditative songs, the visible witness of the communion which is the Body of Christ which welcomes us and upon whose faith we can lean and rest... There is also pressure in our country to renew the beauty of the liturgy, to make its symbols more accessible, thinking especially of the youngest people and the many who have no roots in the faith through their families.

In a village close to Budapest, I saw how everyone, even those who didn't go, felt involved in the Rome meeting. Several old people had supported the preparation and prayed in communion with the pilgrims during the meeting. When they came back, the young people visited each one of the old people to relate their experiences. It was very beautiful to see the black headscarves of the old women mixed in with the young people at the prayer and meeting in the village church afterwards.

This wellspring of the common prayer, along with the Eucharist and the other sacraments, enables us to find the strength we need in daily life to live out the Gospel; to dare to forgive, to seek to accomplish reconciliations between Christians within the parish as well as between different denominations. And also to be a leaven of trust in society. For such a long time, there had been so much mistrust that people had started to stay at home and resign themselves to silence and indifference. It means daring to make some gesture — a first step, a visit...

The Church is a place which can welcome and sustain new initiatives,such as sharing. So, on returning from Rome it was important to do something concrete. Several groups took steps to help Ethiopia. Others collected food and aid to help refugees. I think that it's very important to help young Hungarians to discover that they have something to give and share, for example with those who are alone, handicapped or unemployed." ■

hannine urs

ah 55.6-13

he whole "Book of Consola-n" (Is.40-55) is a call to the ople of God to take a new p and discover a new hori-n to life in God. They seem have reason for their disap-ntment in God: the temple s been destroyed, the prom-d land devastated, the time exile has come... God has kept his promises!

Within your horizon you are nt, Isaiah tells the people. God's horizon is much ler! And his greatness lies in t he stays close even when re can be no more reliance external things. God will ep his promise, beyond all hopes, as surely as the rain kes seeds sprout for the d, returning grain to the wer.

very believer is called to ss over similar boundaries. sting that God is letting him-f be found now can seem to a poor message in the face all the events, sometimes rsh ones, that we experi-ce. Yet this message bears hin it the strength of a life yond our hopes. It opens a d through our deserts, and this road we go beyond our-ves. We are no longer re-icted to considering only our n resources but we partici-te in that mysterious destiny the "Servant of God" who, espised and rejected by ople" (53.3), became the ght of the nations" (49.6).

As we set out on this road, shall already be given a mpse of a joy that will break th. All of nature will partici-te in a kind of new creation. on the road we will find our-lves together with many hers. "A people yet to be rn shall praise God" (Ps 2.18).

How can I persevere in trust God's promise, even when it no longer possible to rely on ternal things?

In which situations have I alized that God is bigger than that I had understood be-re, and was listening to me in fferent way than I expected?

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

Meditating on the word

July

1 Fri — Numbers 12.1-8 Acts 14.8-18 **Mark 4.21-24**
Make the Lord your joy: he will give you more than your heart's desire. Psalm 37

2 Sat — Nb 23.7-12
Jesus said: This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. **Mk 4.26-29**

3 SUN — Ezekiel 2.2-5 Mk 6.1-6
In each person the Holy Spirit manifests its action for the good of all. **1 Corinthians 12.7-10**

4 Mon — Ac 14.19-23 Mk 4.30-34
The Lord your God is a merciful God who will not forsake you. **Deuteronomy 4.12,29-31**

5 Tue — Dt 4.33-39 Ac 16.9-15 **Mk 4.35-41**
I shall sing the faithful love of the Lord for ever, from age to age my lips shall declare your truth. For you have said: love is built for ever, you have fixed your truth in the heavens. Psalm 89

6 Wed — Dt 6.4-9 Ac 16.22-34
Jesus said to the man he had healed: Go home to your people and tell them everything that the Lord, in his mercy, has done for you. **Mk 5.18-24**

7 Thu — Dt 7.7-9 Mk 5.25-34
Paul said: In God we live and move and have our being. **Ac 17.22-31**

8 Fri — Dt 8.2-3,12-15 Ac 20.7-12
Jesus said: Do not be afraid; only have faith. **Mk 5.35-43**

9 Sat — Dt 10.12-19
Be mindful of prisoners as if you were imprisoned with them, and of those who are badly treated as if you yourselves were suffering. **Hebrews 13.1-6**

10 SUN — Amos 7.12-15 Mk 6.7-13
God has let us know the mystery of his good purpose: to bring all things together under Christ, as head. **Ephesians 1.3-14**

11 Mon — Dt 15.7-11 Mk 6.30-34
Paul said: I do not place any value on my own life, provided that I complete the mission the Lord Jesus gave me — to bear witness to the good news of God's grace. **Ac 20.22-27**

12 Tue — Ac 20.28-36 Mk 6.35-44
The Word is very near to you: it is on your lips and in your heart for you to put it into practice. **Dt 30.11-14**

13 Wed — Ac 21.10-14 Mk 6.45-52
Choose life, in the love of God, listening to his voice, holding fast to him: for in this your life consists. **Dt 30.19-20a**

14 Thu — Dt 31.6-8 Mk 7.31-37
Paul said: I have borne witness to great and small alike, saying that the Christ was to suffer and that, as the first to rise from the dead, he was to proclaim a light for all nations. **Ac 26.12-23**

15 Fri — 1 John 1.1-4 Mk 8.11-21
Moses said: God is our rock, his works are perfect. All his ways are just. **Dt 32.1-4**

16 Sat — Dt 32.10-12
Who can condemn us? Christ Jesus, who died — yes and more who was raised from the dead, is at God's right hand interceding for us. **Romans 8.31-39**

17 SUN — Jeremiah 23.1-6 Ep 2.13-18
When Jesus saw the large crowd, he had compassion on them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd. **Mk 6.30-34**

18 Mon — Isaiah 40.1-5 Mk 8.27-33
John writes: This is what we have heard from Christ: God is light, and there is no darkness at all in him. **1 Jn 1.5-7**

19 Tue — Is 40.6-8 1 Jn 1.8-2.2
Jesus said: Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the Gospel will save it. **Mk 8.34-37**

20 Wed — Is 40.9-11 Mk 9.1-10
John writes: Whoever claims to be in Christ must walk as he did. **1 Jn 2.3-8**

21 Thu — Is 40.25-28 1 Jn 2.9-11
A man said to Jesus: I believe! Help my lack of faith. **Mk 9.14-29**

22 Fri — Is 40.29-31 Mk 9.33-37
The world and its desires are passing away, but whoever does the will of God remains for ever. **1 Jn 2.12-17**

23 Sat — Is 41.8-10
Jesus said: If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, then in truth I tell you, they will certainly not lose their reward. **Mk 9.38-41,50**

24 SUN — 2 Kings 4.42-44 Ep 4.1-6
Jesus, realizing that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, fled away to the hills alone. **John 6.1-15**

25 Mon — Matthew 20.20-28 Mk 10.13-16
ST JAMES
We carry the treasure of God's glory in earthen vessels to show that this all-surpassing power is from God, not from us. **2 Corinthians 4.7-15**

26 Tue — Is 41.17-20 1 Jn 2.20-27
Jesus told a rich man: You lack just one thing: go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. **Mk 10.17-27**

27 Wed — 1 Jn 2.29-3.5 Mk 10.28-34
The Lord says: My servant does not cry out or raise his voice. Faithfully he presents justice; he will not falter or be discouraged until he has established justice on the earth. **Is 42.1-4**

28 Thu — Is 42.5-7 1 Jn 3.13-14,16-18
Jesus said to his disciples: You know that, in the world, rulers lord it over their subjects and make their power felt. This is not to happen among you. No; anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant. **Mk 10.35-45**

29 Fri — Is 42.10a,16 Mk 10.46-52
If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knows all things. **1 Jn 3.19-24**

30 Sat — Mk 11.1-11
Thus says the Lord, the one who created you: Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name, you are mine. **Is 43.1-3a,4a**

31 SUN — Exodus 16.2-15 Jn 6.24-35
Let the attitude of your minds be renewed in order to put on the new self, created to be like God in the righteousness and holiness of the truth. **Ep 4.17-24**

August

Meditating on the word

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

1 Mon — Isaiah 43.10-13, 1 Jn 4.1-4
John the Baptist came as the prophet Isaiah said: A voice of one calling in the desert, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." **Matthew 3.1-6**

2 Tue — 1 Jn 4.7-9, Mt 3.7-11
Thus says the Lord: Look, I am doing something new, already it is appearing, do you not see it? I am making a way in the desert. And my people will proclaim my praise. **Is 43.18-20**

3 Wed — Is 44.1-3, Mt 3.13-17
This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us. **1 Jn 4.10-16**

4 Thu — Is 44.6-8, Mt 4.1-11
This is the command Christ gave us: Whoever loves God must also love their brother. **1 Jn 4.17-21**

5 Fri — Is 44.21-23, 1 Jn 5.1-4
Jesus said: Repent, for the kingdom of God is close at hand. **Mt 4.12-17**

6 Sat — Daniel 7.9-10,13-14, 2 Peter 1.16-19
TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD
Jesus was transfigured in the presence of his disciples. And a cloud covered them with its shadow, and from the cloud a voice came: This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him. **Mark 9.2-10**

7 SUN — Ephesians 4.30-5.2, John 6.41-51
When Elijah was discouraged, an angel of God touched him and said, "Get up and eat, or the journey will be too long for you." So he got up and ate and drank, and strengthened by that food he walked until he reached the mountain of God. **1 Kings 19.4-8**

8 Mon — Is 45.2-4, 1 Jn 5.5-11
Jesus saw Simon Peter and Andrew his brother. They were casting their net into the lake, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of people." At once they left their nets and followed him. **Mt 4.18-25**

9 Tue — Is 45.8,15, 1 Jn 5.13-15
Jesus said: Happy are those with clear hearts, for they shall see God. **Mt 5.1-12**

10 Wed — Is 45.18-19, Ephesians 1.1-6
Jesus said: Let your light shine in people's sight, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. **Mt 5.13-16**

11 Thu — Is 45.22-24a, Ep 1.7-10
Jesus said: If you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. **Mt 5.17-20,23-24**

12 Fri — Is 46.1-9, Mt 5.33-42
In Christ, you you have heard the message of the truth and the gospel of your salvation, and having put your trust in it you have received the mark of the Holy Spirit. **Ep 1.11-14**

13 Sat — Is 48.3-10
Jesus said: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. **Mt 5.43-48**

14 SUN — Proverbs 9.1-6, Ep 5.15-20
Jesus said: I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever. **Jn 6.51-58**

15 Mon — Zephaniah 3.14-18a, 1 Corinthians 15.20-26
THE VIRGIN MARY
Mary said to the angel: Let it happen to me as you have said. **Luke 1.38-56**

16 Tue — Is 48.17-19, Mt 6.1-6
May God enlighten the eyes of your heart that you may know the hope to which God has called you. **Ep 1.15-19**

17 Wed — Is 48.20-21, Ep 1.20-23
Jesus said: If you forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours. **Mt 6.7-15**

18 Thu — Is 49.1-4, Ep 2.4-10
Jesus said: Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, but store up treasures for yourselves in heaven. For wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be also. **Mt 6.16-21**

19 Fri — Is 49.5-7, Mt 6.22-24
Christ is our peace. Through the cross, in his own person he has killed hatred. **Ep 2.12-18**

20 Sat — Is 49.8-10
Jesus said: Do not worry about your life. Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice. **Mt 6.25-34**

21 SUN — Joshua 24.1-2,15-18, Ep 5.25-32
Seeing that many of his disciples were turning away, Jesus said to the Twelve, "What about you, do you want to leave me too?" Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." **Jn 6.60-69**

22 Mon — Is 49.13-15, Ep 2.19-22
Jesus said: Do not judge, and you will not be judged. **Mt 7.1-5**

23 Tue — Is 49.18-23, Ep 3.2-6
Jesus said: Ask, and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. **Mt 7.7-12**

24 Wed — Ep 3.7-13, Mt 7.21-29
God wakens my ear every morning to listen as a disciple. **Is 50.4-7**

25 Thu — Is 50.8-10, Mt 8.1-13
May God strengthen you through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. **Ep 3.14-21**

26 Fri — Is 51.4-7,11, Mt 8.14-22
With all humility, gentleness and patience, bear with one another in love. Take every care to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the bond of peace. **Ep 4.1-6**

27 Sat — Mt 8.23-27
The Lord says: I am the one who comforts you. Why then should you be afraid of mortal beings? **Is 51.12-16**

28 SUN — Deuteronomy 4.1-8, Mk 7.14-23
Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for human anger does not bring about God's justice. **James 1.17-27**

29 Mon — Is 52.7-10, Mt 9.1-8
God's people is being prepared for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself. **Ep 4.7-13**

30 Tue — Is 52.13-15, Ep 4.13-16
Jesus said: Mercy is what pleases me, not sacrifice. And indeed, I came to call not the upright but sinners. **Mt 9.9-13**

31 Wed — Ep 4.22-29, Mt 9.14-17
The servant of the Lord bore our suffering. We find healing through his wounds. **Is 53.1-5**

Johannine Hours

Luke 1.67-79
The Benedictus

Johannine hours are suggested as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer, in the midst of our life at home. During the course of the day (if possible, two days in the same week) take a couple of hours to read the Bible passages with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, the group (3 to 10 people) meet together to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

Zechariah did not believe G could work a miracle in his and he became dumb (1.5-2 But as he makes the step of lieving in God's promise, hardness of his heart is dissolv his power of speech returns a a song of praise breaks out. acclaims the arrival of the r ment, for which people have be waiting for centuries, when "rising sun has come to sh upon those in darkness and in shadow of death." His ch John, will be John the Bapt who is to prepare people to ceive God himself. Yes, the Gr Day has begun, nothing will able to stop it.

As we sing the Benedictus, are placed at the heart of a cru moment of human history: visit of God. Everything chang The centre of our life is mov This song turns us towards G for Christ to flood us with his lig the greatest reality that touch our life today.

We need to be no longer co centrated upon the darkne both within and around us, but see this reality in the light of New Covenant: Christ comes deliver me from my oppress and from fear; by forgiveness places me, for always, in the "t der mercy of our God"; and, more, God grants me to "se him without fear". When whole life participates in that ra cal conversion that makes us reality in the light of the New C venant, we become reflections God's light ourselves. And we f the courage needed to go w Christ into even "the darkne and the shadow of death" create with him a "way of peace

What helps me to look at (my own, that of others, that the world) as the place where G wants to accomplish the mira of his will of love?
What is the "darkness" into wh God asks me to go without fea order to be a bearer of peace?

**ere is a bible meditation every morn-
at Taizé** to introduce a theme for the
y's reflections. Afterwards there is a
e of silence to prepare for the small
up meetings in the afternoon. In the
t issue of the Letter from Taizé the first
t of the Letter from Ethiopia was intro-
ced. Here are some notes about the
cond part:

**tercontinental
eetings**

tercontinental meetings, will be
ld at Taizé each week (Sunday to
unday) until 6 November. The
ble introductions and times of si-
nce and sharing enable each per-
n to find resources for their per-
nal commitment. Every day, in
o marquees, those from the
outhern continents welcome the
her young people. The exchanges
ake it possible to discover that
en in the most troubled regions of
e world young Christians are
aying, committing their lives and
eeking to be witnesses of trust on
arth.

or many young people, a second
eek, spent in silence perhaps, can
elp discover an inner life in com-
union with Christ more deeply and
realize for oneself Christ's words,
Come and follow me."

or practical details and to register
r a meeting, write to Taizé. Adults
nd families: please write well in ad-
ance and wait for a reply. It makes
possible to provide better practi-
al arrangements to welcome
veryone, if those for whom it is
ossible avoid the first week of Au-
ust and come instead in early July
late August.

*etailed information is in the previous
sue of the* **Letter from Taizé.**

"God expects much of you"

In some passages in the Bible believers speak of the struggle they wage against discouragement or self-doubt. The word that is addressed to them is, at the same time, a confirmation of their calling and an even greater challenge. To Jeremiah who asks, "Why is my suffering continual, my wound incurable? You are a deceptive stream for me, a water on which one cannot count", the Lord replies, "If you return, I shall help you to return to stand before me. Distinguish between what is precious and what is base, and my words will be in your mouth" (Jeremiah 15.18-19). When the same prophet Jeremiah doubts his ability to do what he is asked and cries out, "Look, I don't know how to speak; I am only a child!", the Lord replies, "Do not say: 'I am a child ', but go to all to whom I send you and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to rescue you" (Jeremiah 1.6-8).

A greater relationship of trust can free us from being closed up in ourselves with our sadness. This step, which is the risk of stepping out beyond ourselves, is the 'yes' that we say to Christ on account of his own commitment to us. This 'yes', whether it be of a hidden nature (Luke 1.26-38, the Annunciation) or more visible (Mark 6.30-44, the feeding of the five thousand), leads to a transformation of our person, our history and the history of those who are entrusted to us.

Christ was able to admire the action of a poor widow who gave less money than others but who gave of herself without calculating (Mark 12.41-44).

Even if our trust in God seems weak and easily broken, instead of lamenting about our lack of faith or getting stuck in comparing ourselves with others, we can undertake actions of faith, actions that express our love: sharing what we have with those in need; going to those who need visiting, close by or far away; committing our whole being to a solidarity with others (James 2.2-5,15-17: God has chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world).

- *What situations around me are a call of God for me and call for an uncalculating gift of myself?*
- *For whom is there suffering where I live? What have I got in order to help?*
- *How can I discover the gifts in others and in myself that make it possible to create with very little?*

Registration form to be sent to: Meetings, TAIZE-COMMUNITY, 71250 CLUNY, France. (Tel. 85.50.18.18)

FIRST NAME :

FAMILY NAME :

ADDRESS :

(with post code and country)

Tel.: ...../..... Occupation: ..... Age : .....

Please circle "Yes" or "No":

I wish to participate in the meeting from: ..... to .....

- I will bring a tent: Yes / No
- If you are driving to Taizé or coming by St. Peter's Coaches, please tick:

car ☐ minibus ☐ St. Peter's Coaches ☐

- For the disabled, adult group-leaders, those who cannot sleep on the floor, please fill in the following: I need a bed: Yes / No. **And if "yes", please circle below who you are:**

woman man couple family with....children disabled person helper of disabl.pers.

- I receive the Letter from Taizé: yes / no
- I have been to Taizé: Yes / No (Last stay: month ..... year .....

Listening to the CONTINENTS

Mae'r Llythyr o Ethiopia ar gael yn Gymraeg

Zimbabwe

The rekindling of hope in southern Africa! While in the whole region, apartheid and bandit activity are causing so much suffering, humiliation and threats for the future, Zimbabwe is a great sign of hope in southern Africa.

Before and after UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence), a white regime founded on apartheid governed. Then there was the war of liberation during which very many people were killed, an estimated 40.000. Now the country has begun on a road of reconciliation; reconciliation between races, and also between political groups and African ethnic groups.

Today, after democratic elections, the government includes Africans of various political movements, four white ministers, and the minister of education is a woman of Asian origin.

Sunday, a man with a young family, is a youth leader based at Silveira House in the diocese of Harare, the capital. He was at Taizé this Easter for several weeks. He spoke of the involment of Christians in Zimbabwe:

"During the war of liberation, suffering struck nearly every family.Many Christians, including priests, were persecuted because of their commitment. The Church had set up a Justice and Peace Commission. Personally, I needed to travel for my work with youth groups. Several times, I was arrested, beaten up and kept for about a week.

Today, in the face of the many different needs of reconstruction and reconciliation, the Church supports and provides leadership for a lot of projects. The Church does much training work. For example, in the centre where I work there is both training for youth group leaders and the promotion of agricultural cooperatives.

One of the things we did, at the end of the war of liberation, was to welcome groups of freedom fighters and prepare them for their home-coming. Many of them, having opted to join the liberation struggle when they were still young, had become used to a life of war, after about fifteen years in the bush. We encouraged those who had left their studies to return and carry on. Some were recruited into the staff at our centre.

There is a growing problem of unemployment in Zimbabwe. We are encouraging young people to engage in small-scale income-generating projects. This is done in mushandirapamwe (cooperative groups). These groups are formed of 15-30 year olds, the smallest group at present is 11 people, the largest 500. With a newly formed group we try to see what the needs of the families in their community are. It is a kind of feasibility study. Then we decide on a project. A sponsor is needed for the project to get off the ground financially.Now there are some poultry projects, piggery projects, market gardening... we have even started a sculpture project. Last year the group sold several of their stone carvings to Germany." ■

East Berlin

"For a year and a half, the prayer which began during the preparation of a meeting with Brother Roger has continued. It is held each day, prepared by people from different parishes in turn. The life of the Church in Berlin is full of activism and so this evening prayer is an important sign. Those who come are very different: young people, older people; those who are involved in their local parish, others who are searching and with many questions...

In winter, the church is not heated and there are sometimes very few of us. What enables us to keep going is faithfulness to the desire for silence, for common prayer, for God. Quite often, after the prayer one of us invites the others to come for tea or a simple meal.

Once a week, we go from the church to a nearby Catholic hospital to pray with the sick and with the staff. This short journey we undertake is symbolic of our search for commitment. Knowing that we share this search with Christians in the West as well as the East helps us to overcome our own barriers." ■

Spain (Mallorca)

"When Easter draws near, parish life comes more intense. Our inward g seeks a personal encounter with Ch and tries to discern what he wants for Every Tuesday and Friday at 8 a.m., sc of us, young and old, meet for morn prayer.

Last Friday, I remember hearing from side the church the games of the child on their way to school, the cars hootin all the noises of a small town getting go at the beginning of the day. I thou about what our morning prayer meant the beginning of a new day (which v probably be very similar to the day befc and especially the wonderful chance sharing that time with others who are so different. Daily life enters into pray and prayer enters daily life... I think, in a case that these morning prayers help us to identify ourselves as a Christian cc munity spread throughout our town.

Personally, these days, I have been thi ing over how I will be able to help, onc have finshed my teacher-training, w children who are left aside or who do n succeed at school.

We are preparing the Easter Sund Eucharist for the prison in Palma. All t young people in our group are taking pa as they did last year; some have been v iting the prison every week since. This e perience and the contact it has given wi people who are isolated and excluded, most cases because of drugs, help us all see better how we can play our part in t coming of God's kingdom."

Letter from Taizé

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